

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED:

1. An isolated polypeptide comprising

- (a) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;
- (b) a variant thereof having substantially similar function selected from immunomodulatory activity and/or anti-viral activity and/or anti-tumour activity; or
- (c) a fragment of (a) or (b) which retains substantially similar function selected from immunomodulatory activity and/or anti-viral activity and/or anti-tumour activity.

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2. A variant or fragment of the polypeptide defined by the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 suitable for raising specific antibodies for said polypeptide and/or a naturally-occurring variant thereof.

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3. A polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide as claimed in claim 1.

4. A polynucleotide as claimed in claim 3 which is a cDNA.

5. A polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide as claimed in claim 1, which

20 polynucleotide comprises:

- (a) the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the coding sequence thereof and/or a sequence complementary thereto;

- (b) a sequence which hybridises to a sequence as defined in (a);

- (c) a sequence that is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to a

25 sequence as defined in (a) or (b); or

- (d) a sequence having at least 60% identity to a sequence as defined in (a), (b) or (c).

6. An expression vector comprising a polynucleotide sequence as claimed in

30 claim 3, which is capable of expressing a polypeptide comprising

- (a) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;

- (b) a variant thereof having substantially similar function selected from immunomodulatory activity and/or anti-viral activity and/or anti-tumour activity; or
- (c) a fragment of (a) or (b) which retains substantially similar function selected from immunomodulatory activity and/or anti-viral activity and/or anti-tumour activity.

7. A host cell containing an expression vector according to claim 6.

8. An antibody specific for a polypeptide as claimed in claim 1.

9. An isolated polynucleotide which directs expression *in vivo* of a polypeptide as claimed in claim 1.

10. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a polypeptide as claimed in claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

11. A method of treating a patient having a Type 1 interferon treatable disease, which comprises administering to said patient an effective amount of a polypeptide as claimed in claim 1.

12. A method of producing a polypeptide according to claim 1, which method comprises culturing host cells containing an expression vector, said vector comprising a polynucleotide sequence encoding said polypeptide under conditions suitable for obtaining expression of the polypeptide and isolating the said polypeptide.

13. A method of identifying a compound having immunomodulatory activity and/or anti-viral activity and/or anti-tumour activity comprising providing a cell capable of expressing the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2 or a naturally-occurring variant thereof, incubating said cell with a compound under test and monitoring for upregulation of the gene encoding said polypeptide or variant.

14. A polynucleotide capable of expressing *in vivo* an antisense sequence to a coding sequence for the amino acid sequence defined by SEQ ID NO: 2 or a naturally-occurring variant of said coding sequence for use in therapeutic treatment of a human or non-human animal.

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15. An antibody as claimed in claim 8 for use in therapeutic treatment.

16. A set of primers for nucleic acid amplification which target sequences within a cDNA as claimed in claim 4.

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17. A nucleic acid probe derived from a polynucleotide as claimed in claim 3.

18. A probe as claimed in claim 17 which is attached to a solid support.

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19. A method of predicting responsiveness of a patient to treatment with a Type 1 interferon, which comprises determining the level of the protein defined by the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 or a naturally-occurring variant thereof, or the corresponding mRNA, in a cell sample from said patient, wherein said sample is obtained from said patient following administration of a Type 1 interferon or is treated prior to said determining with a Type 1 interferon *in vitro*.

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20. A method as claimed in claim 19 wherein the interferon administered prior to obtaining said sample or used to treat said sample *in vitro* is the interferon proposed for treatment of said patient.

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21. A method as claimed in claim 19 wherein a sample comprising peripheral blood mononuclear cells isolated from a blood sample of the patient is treated with a Type 1 interferon *in vitro*.

22. A method as claimed in claim 19 wherein said determining comprises determining the level of mRNA encoding the protein defined by the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 or a naturally-occurring variant of said protein.

5 23. A non-human transgenic animal capable of expressing a polypeptide that is claimed in claim 1.

24. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a polynucleotide as claimed in claim 9 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

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25. A method of treating a patient having a Type 1 interferon treatable disease, which comprises administering to said patient an effective amount of a polynucleotide as claimed in claim 9.

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